



PHOTO: STAR

Fine arts students bedeck the walls near the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka with Bangla scripts yesterday ahead of February 21, when the nation pays tribute to its language martyrs of 1952.

Another Taslima book banned

UNB, Dhaka

The government has banned another book of controversial writer Taslima Nasrin, now living in exile.

An official handout yesterday said the government has banned the entry, publicity, sale, printing, reprinting and storing of her book "Shei Shab Andhakar", published from Kolkata, India.

The ban has been imposed as the book caused severe hatred and reaction in the state, society and religious community in Bangladesh as it contains serious objectionable statements on Islam and Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM), the handout said.

SC judge appointment adds to superseding

Justice Amirul Kabir elevated to Appellate Division

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday appointed a judge to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court by superseding a senior judge of the High Court Division.

Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury superseded senior judge Syed Amirul Islam in the appointment that was signed by President Iajuddin Ahmed in consultation with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Earlier, Justices MM Ruhul Amin, Tafazzul Islam and MA Aziz super-

seded Justice Syed Amirul.

The appointment was made to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Chief Justice KM Hasan on January 27.

His appointment will be effective from the date of his swearing-in, an official handout said.

Justice Syed Amirul is the most senior judge of the High Court Division, who was appointed as a judge of the court on February 10, 1994, much ahead of Amirul Kabir, who joined on June 1, 1996.

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Bombs go off in cinema, 4 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Four people were injured when three hand bombs went off at a movie house at Rupsha upazila last night.

The injured are owner of the movie house Alam, employee Nizam, security guard Tajul Islam and Asad, a spectator. All were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Witnesses said unidentified elements riding motor cycles hurled the bombs at Rupshagor cinema hall at around 8:00pm and escaped.

The incident created panic in the area. Shops downed their shutters and traffic on Khulna- Bagerhat route came to a halt.

The joint forces cordoned off the cinema hall and adjoining areas and started a combing operation to track down the bomb-throwers.



PHOTO: STAR

People try to salvage their last things from the remains of burnt-out houses in Islambagh in Dhaka yesterday after about 60 dwellings were reduced to ashes in an overnight blaze.

More 'pro-BNP staff' brought to Dhaka zone of Titas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd (TGTDC) yesterday transferred its 26 Dhaka-based staff to accommodate pro-BNP trade unionists from different zones outside the capital.

All these 26 staff are activists of the Titas Gas Karmachari Union -- an affiliate of the AL's labour front Jatiya Sramik League, and the 25 replacements mostly belong to three BNP-supported trade unions, sources said. Name of the other replacement is yet to be finalised.

The alliance government has so far transferred 574 Titas staff from Dhaka since coming into power. Trade unionism in the TGTDC has been 'officially' suspended for over a year now amidst the cry to save the organisation from the clutches of militant unionists.

But the BNP-backed trade union leaders have remained active unofficially and are even influencing the TGTDC management for transfers and promotions.

"Transfers are meant to soup up the organisation," observed a Titas official, "but this is not the case here.

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Denial of basic rights now an everyday affair

Democratic Lawyers' Association conference told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The people are now suffering mainly due to violation of the constitution in governance and denial of their fundamental rights has become an everyday affair.

Senior lawyers expressed this view at the third national conference of Bangladesh Democratic Lawyers' Association held on the Supreme Court premises yesterday.

Addressing the conference, Supreme Court Bar Association President Rakanuddin Mahmud said the practices of the state's executive organ are far removed from constitutional provisions.

"We are passing thorough a critical juncture in national life. People are being dehumanised in police custody and in the open

streets as well," he said.

President of International Association of Democratic Lawyers Jitendra Sarma could not attend the conference because he was denied visa.

Leaders of Indian Bar Council from West Bengal, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu attended it.

Former High Court judge Naimuddin Ahmed said the constitution is being flouted since 1972 and its mutilation began with 1st and 4th amendments.

He called upon the lawyers to play their due role in protecting the judiciary from corruption. The bar and the bench must unite to establish a corruption-free judiciary, he said.

Vice-president of the Bar Council

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Concern over below-par madrassah edn

JS body asks boards to fight exam cheating, corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most teachers, students and unscrupulous board officials are responsible for substandard education in 16,429 registered madrashas across Bangladesh, a parliamentary body observed at a meeting yesterday.

The parliamentary standing committee on the education ministry asked the ministry to immediately take effective measures to improve the standard of madrasa education, pegging the situation as grave.

"The madrasa board gives sub-par education as teachers are not attentive to their duties and students tend to copying in examination," Shamsul Alam Pramanik, chairman of the committee, told newsmen emerging from the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The parliamentary body also asked the general education board chairmen, who attended the meeting on special invitation, to free the boards from corruption and bring

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DETECTING CRIMINALS

Cops want phones with caller ID

STAR REPORT

Law-enforcement agencies have called for telephones with caller identification device to detect anonymous callers blamed for spreading bomb and fire scares.

An official said police informed the home ministry about it after some international flights were delayed as anonymous callers told Zia International Airport that bombs were secreted in the planes, which proved hoaxes in a string of recent incidents.

Police carried out a hectic operation for hours in the diplomatic enclave in Baridhara last month in search of bombs after a call from an unknown person.

"Such calls have become an worry for us and we have no mechanism to know the caller's identity in case of a hoax," a senior police official told The Daily Star.

The ministry plans to forward a request to Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB) to enable phones with calling line identification presentation (CLIP).

Subscribers could avoid unsolicited calls once the phones are CLIP-

enabled -- a facility private cellphone operators provide.

A senior BTB official says only new exchanges have such facility, adding: "If the authorities want, the BTB can provide CLIP for phones at police stations to track misleading information."

The BTB can easily replace the old phones with CLIP-enabled sets but phones under the old exchanges require upgrading to offer such facility.

An official says the BTB planned to introduce caller ID for all phones under a project but it could not be done as it involves huge funds.

"It requires a customised software to enable old exchanges with caller identification device which is costly," the official said, adding the project is going slow as the BTB did not charge for caller ID. Earlier, the BTB planned to introduce CLIP as a value-added project.

Telephone subscribers believe a substantial reduction in unwanted calls can curb call-related crimes.

"Some callers call people with intent to annoy them," says Shahfiqui Alam, a BTB subscriber.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Poultry Welfare Association members shout slogans as they hold placards in a procession in Dhaka yesterday. About 300 members of the association took part in the demonstration to shore up public confidence in safe poultry products.

EKUSHEY PROGRAMME

Traditional venue ends up in BNP's JSSS hands

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Ruling BNP's cultural front has forced the Sammilita Sangskritik Jote (SSJ), a non-political cultural body that had been organising the Amar Ekushey programmes since 1984, to shift its traditional venue from the Central Shaheed Minar to Rabindra Sarobar Mancha at Dhanmondi lake.

The Jatiyatabadi Samajik-Sangskritik Sangstha (JSSS) last year also drove the SSJ out of the venue, sources alleged.

SSJ President Nasir Uddin Bachchu viewed the move as a blow to the national heritage and felt a permanent guideline should be there on the use of the Shaheed Minar venue. "If the government or the (Dhaka University) authorities want a dialogue on the matter, we are ready to sit," he said.

The SSJ and JSSS are trading blames over the issue. The JSSS claimed to have obtained Dhaka University's (DU) permission to use the venue but the SSJ said it had been organising the programmes commemorating the Language

Movement at the Central Shaheed Minar for 20 years and never before did it require permission from the DU.

JSSS President Wasimul Bari Rajib said they are organising the programmes at the Shaheed Minar after getting the nod from Dhaka University authorities.

DU Proctor AK Firoz Ahmed said the JSSS asked the university authorities for permission to hold its programmes at the Shaheed Minar from February 16 to 19 and DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz gave the nod. But, the SSJ had not taken permission from the DU.

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Prayer Timings		
February 20		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-00	6-05
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		